Recovery

The recovery while traveling in a straight line occurs in the best possible way when the driver does not turn the steering wheel of the car or apply the brakes, and gently eases the pressure off the accelerator. The opposite of either of these actions could put the car into a skid from which recovery would be difficult or impossible. In such conditions when braking is unavoidable, the recovering most often occurs when the driver lightly pumps the brakes until hydroplaning has stopped. This technique can vary somewhat with antiskid brakes. Again, it is similar to driving onto ice.

If the rear wheels hydroplane and cause oversteer, the recovery occurs most favorably when the driver steers in the direction of the skid until the rear tires regain traction, and then rapidly steer in the other direction to straighten the car.

Motorcycles

According to many sources, motorcycles benefit from narrow tires with round, elongated contact patches. Narrow tires are less vulnerable to hydroplaning because vehicle weight is distributed over a smaller area, and rounded tires more easily push water aside. These advantages diminish on lighter motorcycles which usually have wider tires. In addition, wet conditions reduce the lateral force that any tire can accommodate before sliding. While a slide in a four-wheeled vehicle may be corrected, the same slide on a motorcycle will usually cause the rider to fall. Even with a relative lack of hydroplaning danger in wet conditions, motorcycle riders must be even more cautious because overall traction is reduced by wet roadways. If you ride a motorcycle, talk to an expert about the technique of laying a bike down. It may come in handy some day.

Aircraft

Hydroplaning may reduce the effectiveness of wheel braking in aircraft on landing or aborting a take-off, and can cause the aircraft to run off the end of the runway. Aircraft which can employ reverse thrust braking have the advantage over road vehicles in such situations, as this type of braking is not affected by hydroplaning, but it requires a considerable distance to operate as it is not as effective as wheel braking on a dry runway.

Hydroplaning is a condition that can exist when an aircraft is landed on a runway surface contaminated with standing water, slush, and/or wet snow. Hydroplaning can have serious adverse effects on ground controllability and braking efficiency. There are three basic types of hydroplaning which are too lengthy to explore completely here in our newsletter. All types are prone to cause the pilot to lose directional control and braking capacity. Remember to "fly the airplane" on the ground under these circumstances. Your control surfaces may still have relevance for directional control until you have escaped hydroplaning effects.

Many of our major airports have developed grooved runways. Thin grooves are cut in the concrete which allows for water to be dissipated and further reduces the potential to hydroplane. However most of our operations in light aircraft involve smaller airports whose runways may not have this technology.

The best strategy is to avoid hydroplaning are maintaining proper tire pressure, maintain your tires, and reduced speeds as much as possible, wherever possible and avoid standing water. These strategies apply for all vehicles.

WAR STORIES

NONE THIS MONTH, NO ONE SENT ANY IN!

THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER: LETS HEAR FROM YOU:
SEND YOUR COMMENTS, TIPS AND IDEAS TO:

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